

# Sermon Notes — *Building Together*

## Series Context

- “Our Present, Their Gift”: Each generation builds something the next generation stands on.
  - Haggai’s generation rebuilt the temple; 70 years later, Nehemiah’s generation continues the work.
  - Cultural Mandate (Gen. 1:28): cultivate, subdue, create spaces where God’s presence is visible and life flourishes.
  - Our present obedience becomes someone else’s gift.
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## Setting the Scene

- Though worship was restored under Haggai, Israel was still spiritually + socially broken:
  - Walls destroyed, people unsafe
  - Inconsistent giving → temple staff unpaid
  - Sabbath ignored
  - Pagan influence in the temple
  - Intermarrying with pagan nations
- Makes sense: decades in exile → trauma, confusion, syncretism, bad theology.
- Parallel to today:
  - Post-Christian culture
  - Biblical illiteracy

- Casual approach to church, generosity, holiness
  - Fractured families, new believers relearning truth
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## Nehemiah's Calling

- Nehemiah (cupbearer in Persia) hears the report of Jerusalem's condition → heartbroken.
  - King notices and funds Nehemiah's return + rebuilding.
  - Mission: rebuild walls physically *and* rebuild worldview spiritually.
  - Nehemiah 3: a record showing how God's people build **together**.
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## What Nehemiah 3 Shows Us About Building God's Kingdom

### 1. The Unaffected Showed Up

- People from Jericho (17 miles), Tekoa (12 miles), Gibeon (6), Mizpah (8), and Nehemiah (1,100 miles).
- They were not personally affected by Jerusalem's brokenness but still chose to build.
- Application:
  - Don't wait until a problem hits *your* house to care.
  - True discipleship runs *toward* the need, not away from it.
  - "This is my wall to build," even when it costs time, money, inconvenience.

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## 2. The Inexperienced Picked Up Bricks

- Goldsmiths, perfumers, merchants—not construction workers—joined the work.
- No one “qualified” is listed.
- Principle: God uses **availability over ability**.
- Application:
  - Serve even when you feel inexperienced.
  - Hold a baby, lead a group, run a camera, welcome someone—just be willing.
  - Obedience sometimes means entering rooms you feel unqualified for.

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## 3. The Overqualified Did the Crappy Work

- The Dung Gate (literal sewage removal gate) was repaired by a **district ruler**.
- Meanwhile, the nobles of Tekoa “would not stoop” → others carried double.
- Application:
  - Pride keeps people from ministry; humility multiplies ministry.
  - Jesus models serving beneath His status (Matt 20, Mark 10, Phil 2).
  - The Kingdom is built when the privileged embrace unpleasant ministry.

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## 4. The Building Started at Home

- Repeated phrase: “repaired opposite his house.”

- Families built the wall section closest to them.
  - Application:
    - Build where God has placed you: home, dorm, apartment, family.
    - Husbands build wives; wives build husbands; parents disciple kids; kids honor parents.
    - If we won't pick up bricks at home, we won't pick them up anywhere else.
    - Then build **together** as a family: serve, give, pray, gather.
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## Key Theme in Nehemiah 3

- “Next to him... next to them... after him...” (31x)
  - God emphasizes **togetherness** ← building is fruitful + joyful when shared.
  - The Church is meant to be shoulder-to-shoulder, not isolated.
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## The Gospel Connection

- Jesus > Nehemiah:
  - Nehemiah left a palace; Jesus left heaven.
  - Nehemiah built a wall; Jesus *became* our wall of protection.
  - Nehemiah carried bricks; Jesus carried the cross.
- We don't build *to be accepted* by Jesus—we build *because we are accepted*.
- It's easier to carry a brick when you remember the cross.